

LYNCHBURG CITY COUNCIL

Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE: **December 14, 2004, Work Session**

AGENDA ITEM NO.: 5

CONSENT:

REGULAR: **X**

CLOSED SESSION:

(Confidential)

ACTION:

INFORMATION: **X**

ITEM TITLE: **Revised Employment Policies and Procedures**

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

SUMMARY: The current Employee Handbook, the primary source of employment policy, has been in place about 10 years and has not kept pace with the multitude of changes in the organization such as City leadership, employee expectations, state and federal regulations and best practices in human resources. Over the past two years, Human Resources facilitated a participatory process to update and revise the City's employment policies and procedures with the overall goals of:

- Developing broad, consistent and equitable policy guidelines that allow departmental flexibility
- Establishing clear employment policies and procedures to guide consistent and equitable decision-making
- Updating and simplifying the language used
- Achieving consistency throughout the organization in major policy areas
- Including all policies, procedures and practices in one place
- Summarizing policy information in a separate Employee Handbook to improve workforce usability.

Through extended research and work with employee groups, the Leadership Team, the City Attorney and the City Manager's Office, Human Resources completed a revised document, "Employment Policies and Procedures", as well as a user-friendly, summary document, "Employee Handbook", for implementation on January 1, 2005 with appropriate transition plans as necessary.

The revised policies and procedures contain some substantive changes but primarily represent up-dated language and documentation of current policies, procedures and practices located in one manual. Primary changes include the following and a full list of substantive changes is attached.

- Establishes that all approved paid hours except sick leave contribute to the threshold of hours necessary for overtime eligibility
- Caps compensatory time banks for non-exempt employees at 60 hours (120 for sworn public safety)
- Establishes "Call-back" and "Stand-by" definitions and pay practices
- Eliminates "adjusted hours" for employees in exempt positions and describes schedule flexibility of exempt employees
- Requires direct deposit for all employees as of March 31, 2005
- Expands allowed use of sick leave to dependent family member illness or incapacity and all employee medical/dental appointments
- Extends funeral leave eligibility to employees holding part-time classified positions and defines its use for the purpose of attending services, managing affairs, etc.

PRIOR ACTION: None

FISCAL IMPACT: No direct fiscal impact is anticipated.

CONTACT(S): Margaret Schmitt

ATTACHMENT: Summary of substantive changes.

REVIEWED BY: lkp

Summary of Substantive Changes to Employee Handbook December 2004

Title – Employment Policies and Procedures
<p>Chapter 1 – Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets the stage for change from “Employee Handbook” to “Employment Policies and Procedures” • Identifies who is responsible for exceptions • Codifies the employment at will relationship • Adds organizational vision, mission and values with definitions • Describes levels of responsibility
<p>Chapter 2 – Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a written explanation of the recruitment process • Expands use of background checks to include those working with children and handling money • Incorporates policies from the “on-line” policy system such as Employment of Relatives and Initial Employment Period • Clarifies Administrative Work Week and alternate tours of duty based on nature of service delivery • Documents current Managed Vacancy Policy and outlines Reduction in Force guidelines • Clarifies basis for Separations from Employment • Establishes a reinstatement policy for employees wishing to return to employment within one year separation in good standing • Documents City policy on “Release of Information” including neutral references
<p>Chapter 3 – Compensation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporates the “Compensation Philosophy” as approved by City Council • Sets the pay adjustment for a reclassification at 5% of base pay or to minimum of new range whichever is higher • Establishes that all approved paid hours except sick leave contribute to the threshold of hours necessary for overtime eligibility • Caps compensatory time banks for non-exempt employees at 60 hours (120 for sworn public safety) • Establishes “Call-back” and “Stand-by” definitions and pay practices • Specifies pay adjustments for demotions for performance or disciplinary reasons at (-10%) or to maximum of new grade • Specifies pay adjustments for voluntary reassignment to position in lower grade at (-5%) or the minimum of the new range whichever results in the least reduction. • Specifies pay adjustments for reassignment to positions with a lower grade and range minimum through no fault or based on management decision • Establishes City Manager approval for Equity Increases • Establishes “Performance Increases” based on City Council action • Specifies that non-exempt employees must record time worked on official timesheets or forms approved by department

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires direct deposit for all employees (by March 31, 2005) • Eliminates “adjusted hours” for employees in exempt positions and specifies the expectation of schedule flexibility of exempt employees
<p>Chapter 4 – Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarifies that employees hired after 7/1/96 pay the “current premium value” for medical coverage after retirement • Changes the time period to receive matching funds in deferred compensation to completion of the initial employment period and allows for future increases in matching funds based on years of service • Reduces the Worker’s Compensation salary supplement to 3 months initially, with review required for 3 month extension • Establishes a \$1.00 minimum on Workers’ Compensation salary supplement • Includes reference to Voluntary Supplemental Benefits availability • Incorporates the Take Home Vehicle policy from the “on-line” system
<p>Chapter 5 – Paid Time Off and Other Absences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes that a department director may approve substitution of sick or funeral leave for previously approved annual leave, with appropriate documentation • Expands appropriate use of sick leave to dependent family member illness or incapacity and all medical/dental appointments • Extends funeral leave eligibility to employees holding part-time classified positions but defines its use for the purpose of attending services, managing affairs, etc. • Updates the description of “military leave” • Eliminates “Long Term Disability”
<p>Chapter 6 – Performance Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporates new performance management policy and evaluation tools • Specifies that the rating system is used for competencies and job specific tasks and responsibilities
<p>Chapter 7 – Workforce Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds workforce development principles • Establishes a broad policy statement regarding employee recognition programs
<p>Chapter 8 – Employee Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings all policies regarding employee responsibility to one location • Relocates Suspected Fraud policy • Updates drug and alcohol testing guidelines • Establishes specific expectations regarding Harassment • Eliminates the requirement that the Threat Assessment Team investigate and act on every workplace violence complaint
<p>Chapter 9 – Grievance Procedure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplifies and clarifies language regarding grievance process and standardizes number of days for submission and response to ten (10) days wherever possible • Identifies those positions that do not have grievance rights • Includes revised forms that provide all information for a specific grievance step on a single page